

## **Governor's Committee to End Homelessness (GCEH) Action Plan**

To achieve an end to homelessness, the GCEH supports the development of capacity in the eight Continuums of Care across the state to have a comprehensive response in place to ensure homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or if it can't be prevented, it is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.

### **GCEH Goals and Objectives**

The GCEH aligns the **goals and objectives** of the State of Missouri plan to end homelessness with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) [\*Home, Together: The Federal Strategic Plan to End Homeless\*](#).

#### **Goals**

- End homelessness among Veterans
- End Chronic Homelessness among people with disabilities
- End Homelessness among families with children
- End Homelessness among unaccompanied youth
- End Homelessness among all other individuals

#### **Objectives**

1. Ensure Homelessness is a Rare Experience
  - Objective 1.1 Collaboratively build lasting systems that end homelessness.
  - Objective 1.2 Increase capacity and strengthen practices to prevent housing crises and homelessness.
2. Ensure Homelessness is a Brief Experience
  - Objective 2.1 Identify and engage all people experiencing homelessness as quickly as possible.
  - Objective 2.2 Provide immediate access to low barrier emergency shelter or other temporary accommodations to all who need it.
  - Objective 2.3 Implement Coordinated Entry to standardize assessment and prioritization processes and streamline connections to housing and services.
  - Objective 2.4 Assist people to move swiftly into permanent housing with appropriate and person centered services.
3. Ensure Homelessness is a one-Time Experience
  - Objective 3.1 Prevent returns to homelessness through connections to adequate services and opportunities.
4. Sustain an End to Homelessness
  - Objective 4.1 Sustain practices and systems at a scale necessary to respond to future needs.

**The GCEH supports the Home, Together areas of focus to accomplish the Goals and Objectives of ending homelessness:**

- Increasing Affordable Housing Opportunities
- Strengthening Prevention and Diversion Practices
- Creating Solutions for Unsheltered Homelessness
- Tailoring Strategies for Rural Communities
- Helping People Who Exit Homelessness to Find Employment Success
- Learning from the Expertise of People with Lived Experience

**The GCEH will support Missouri Continuums of Care to develop a systematic response and capacity to:**

- Quickly identify and engage people at risk of and experiencing homelessness.
- Intervene to prevent people from losing their housing and divert people from entering the homeless service system.
- Provide people with immediate access to shelter and crisis services without barriers to entry if homelessness does occur.
- Quickly connect people experiencing homelessness to housing assistance and services tailored to their unique needs and strengths to help them achieve and maintain stable housing

**That will successfully achieve the goals and objectives of Home, Together.**

**Action Agenda:**

1. Support the development and functioning of *Coordinated Entry systems* in each CoC
2. Expand availability and accessibility of affordable permanent housing
3. Stabilize households to prevent entry into the homeless delivery system using prevention, diversion, and reunification strategies
4. Establish Benchmarks and Use data to evaluate statewide progress and report on results
5. Strengthen communication by developing a statewide communications strategy to key stakeholders

**GCEH Action Strategies 2018-2020**

**Introduction:**

***Coordinated Entry*** is our communities' newest approach to ending homelessness. Instead of calling multiple numbers seeking assistance, each community has easily accessed phone or walk-in procedures for homeless persons to be assessed for housing services. Staff use standardized

assessment tools for fair and equal access to homeless assistance. Once assessments are completed, households are either connected directly with services, or placed on housing prioritization lists based on their vulnerability and the severity of service needs. Households may also be connected with other housing or community services/options while waiting for housing assistance.

**1) Support the development and functioning of *Coordinated Entry systems* in each CoC to:**

- Quickly identify and engage people at risk of and experiencing homelessness;
- Intervene to prevent and divert people from entering the homelessness services system through linkages with mainstream and community support services;
- Provide immediate access to shelter and crisis services. Quickly connect households to available housing assistance to help them achieve and maintain stable housing.
- Strengthen linkages between child welfare, domestic violence providers, early education, mainstream resources, public housing authorities, workforce development, state resources, faith based organizations, and Coordinated Entry systems.

- ***Strategy to quickly identify and engage people at risk of and experiencing homelessness -*** Leadership within each Continuum of Care or region will develop a Coordinated Entry process that is accessible and inclusive for the region served. Coordinated Entry access points with contact information will be advertised both within each Continuum or region, as well as on the GCEH website, [www.endhomelessnessmo.org](http://www.endhomelessnessmo.org). Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) staff will work with Department of Mental Health (DMH) housing staff to maintain the updated list of Coordinated Entry contacts on the [www.endhomelessnessmo.org](http://www.endhomelessnessmo.org) website.

- **Goal review dates:** August 2018

- ***Strategy to strengthen linkages between state partners and Coordinated Entry systems -*** Governor's Committee to End Homelessness (GCEH) members will reach out and engage state partners and stakeholders in the Coordinated Entry process. New stakeholders will be invited to participate in GCEH meetings or in local Continuum meetings around Coordinated Entry. GCEH leadership will initiate outreach to stakeholders at the state level. State agency partners will provide contact information for local Continuums to engage partners at the local level.

- **Goal review date:** February 2019

**2) Expand availability and accessibility of affordable permanent housing**

**Production & development**

- Assess and communicate the impact of changes in funding for state affordable housing tax credits on the production of affordable housing in Missouri
- Provide feedback on the State Consolidated plan for affordable housing

- Track and communicate the number of affordable housing units developed, rehabbed, and funded annually through MHDC
- Promote statewide funding, construction, and/or subsidies for rental housing units
- Identify high need areas for affordable rental production. Share information with stakeholders and developers. Track rental occupancy/vacancy rates and areas of job growth to promote rental production in high need areas.

**Rental subsidies**

- Compile all state & federal rental subsidy resources and criteria for accessing subsidies, along with waiting lists, and share information statewide
- Map homelessness and waiting list data to highlight most needed areas for stronger resource coordination around rental subsidies.

- ***Strategy to assess the impact of changes in funding for state affordable housing tax credits -***  
Compare number of affordable housing units produced in Missouri prior to, and after reduced state tax credit funding for affordable housing. Communicate impact of funding cuts to legislators.

- **Goal review date:** February 2019

- ***Strategy to provide feedback on the State Consolidated Plan -*** Invite DED representatives to share accomplishments and proposed changes to the state Consolidated Plan. Encourage GCEH representatives to give feedback on the plan through written comments and/or attendance at public hearings.

- **Goal review date:** August 2019

**3) Stabilize households to prevent entry into the homeless delivery system using prevention, diversion, and reunification strategies**

- Identify and align federal and state funding available for homeless prevention and crisis intervention, to support households in keeping their current housing
- Encourage and support effective discharge planning from corrections, foster care, mental health, health care, and other institutional settings
- Share best practice information for homelessness prevention and diversion strategies to stabilize households prior to becoming homeless
- Communicate state and federal agency resources to support housing families in crisis to local Continuums of Care
- Promote training in case management focused on housing and income stability.
- Outreach to court systems, highway patrol and police departments to educate about

## Coordinated Entry processes

- **Strategy to align federal and state funding** - Assess and document resources, funding and strategies currently used by Department of Corrections, Department of Social Services, Department of Mental health, Missouri Housing Development Commission, Department of Health and Senior Services, domestic violence providers, VA providers, Public Housing authorities, and Community Action agencies to provide emergency shelter and/or supportive housing to households in crisis.
  - **Goal review date:** August 2019
- **Strategy to strengthen statewide discharge planning** - As part of the Discharge Policy, GCEH will create a resource tool for corrections facilities, foster care staff, and mental health treatment centers about housing options, diversion programs, and reunification resources for their clients to utilize upon exit. Tool will be distributed statewide. Representatives from the GCEH, upon request, will discuss the tool with center staff. Tool will be used to educate and build new partnerships.
  - **Goal review date:** August 2019
- **Strategy to share best practice information on homeless prevention and diversion** - GCEH members will work with MHDC staff to develop statewide standards for homeless prevention assistance. Information and links to homeless prevention and diversion best practices will also be shared on the [www.endhomelessnessmo.org](http://www.endhomelessnessmo.org) website.
  - **Goal review date:** August 2019

## 4) Use data to evaluate statewide progress and report on results

- Develop a simple GCEH data dashboard with indicators to track statewide progress in ending homelessness
- Engage stakeholders across state & federal agencies & nonprofits, to review data quarterly, communicate success, and recommend strategies to strengthen progress
- Specifically track state progress in ending veteran, chronic, family, and youth homelessness.

- **Strategy to engage stakeholders to share and review data** - GCEH leadership will invite state partners and key stakeholders to share data at GCEH meetings. GCEH membership will recommend strategies for strengthening progress and communicating success.
  - **Goal review date:** February 2019
  
- **Strategy to develop a statewide “Dashboard” on Missouri progress to end homelessness** - Institute for Community Alliances (ICA) will engage leadership in each Continuum to share HMIS data to show a statewide picture of homelessness and resources available to address homelessness. Through an ad hoc working group, local Continuum leadership will work with ICA to share homeless data. Data from state and federal partners will be integrated into the statewide dashboard as available and appropriate.
  - **Goal review date:** February 2019

**5) Strengthen communication by developing a statewide communications strategy to key stakeholders to:**

- Share and promote national evidence-based best practices
- Spotlight successes around the state
- Share data indicators of progress
- Share opportunities for education & advocacy
- Share resource information including sample MOUs, performance measurement tools, assessments, etc.

- ***Strategy to share opportunities for progress, promote resources and highlight successes and progress*** - MHDC staff will use electronic communication “shout outs” (up to 3 per month) to share important information with GCEH members and key stakeholders. One “shout-out” each month will share resource information and links from stakeholders and GCEH members. The other two “shout-outs” will include the GCEH agenda, minutes, and information shared at GCEH meetings and follow-up meeting reminders. MHDC members should email resource information to MHDC designated staff for inclusion in the “shout-outs”.

**Goal review date:** February 2019

- ***Strategy to share and promote performance measurement tools, assessments, sample MOUs, and evidence based best practices*** -The GCEH will share and promote evidence based best practices, performance measurement tools, assessments, and the information to inform CoC progress through the electronic project management software “Basecamp”, as well as through month meetings of the GCEH subcommittee, MC2, is comprised of CoC staff leadership. Any member of the Basecamp sharing site may post information and resources.

**Goal review date:** February 2019

- ***Strategy to share data indicators of progress, spotlight successes around the state, and share best practice information on ending homelessness with key stakeholders*** - The GCEH leadership will review and recommend updates to the [www.endhomelessmo.org](http://www.endhomelessmo.org) website for the purpose of sharing key information and resources on ending homelessness with key stakeholders. MHDC staff will work with GCEH leadership on updating and maintaining the website.

**Goal review date:** August 2019